

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 049735

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ORIGIN NEA-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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DRAFTED BY NEAAFN: LRMURRAY: BAS

APPROVED BY NEA:WSWEISLOGEL

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P 052033Z MAR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 049735

FOL REPEAT STATE 049735 SENT ACTION RABAT ALGIERS NOUAKCHOTT
MAR 01

QTE

UNCLAS STATE 049735

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SS, US

SUBJECT: SAHARA: PRESIDENT FORD QUOTED ON SAHARA

REFERENCES: RABAT 1115 (NOTAL); ALGIERS 0511

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF REMARKS ON SAHARA BY PRESIDENT FORD IN
FEB 25 HEARST PUBLISHERS INTERVIEW: QUOTE:

QUESTION: I JUST WANT TO ASK ONE. DO YOU SHARE ANY OF
THESE EUROPEAN JITTERS ABOUT MOROCCO? THEY HAVE MOROCCO
LINED UP AS ANOTHER ANGOLA.

THE PRESENT: YOU HAVE THE VERY CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE
BETWEEN MOROCCO ON THE ONE HAND AND ALGERIA ON THE OTHER
OVER THE SPANISH SAHARA. YOU HAVE THIS GROUP OF NOMDS
CALLED THE POLISARIOS, WHICH IS A FESTERING SITUATION
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THERE. A MAXIMUM EFFORT IS BEING MADE BY A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS

TO TRY AND KEEP THAT FROM BLOWING UP INTO ANOTHER ANGOLA.
A NUMBER OF THE ARAB NATIONS ARE VERY CONCERNED. WE ARE
CONCERNED, AND I THINK A NUMBER OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE
LIKEWISE CONCERNED.

QUESTION: THE RUSSIANS, THEY SAY, ARE ARMING THE ALGERIANS
TO DO THIS, OR PUSHING THE ALGERIANS TO DO IT, AND THERE IS
SOME TALK ABOUT IMPORTING NORTH KOREAN MERCENARIES IN
THERE.

THE PRESIDENT: I HAVE READ SOME OF THOSE RUMORS, BUT SO FAR I
THINK IT HAS BEEN KEPT AT A REASONABLY CALM LEVEL.
BUT, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE WORKING ON
IT. END QUOTE. INGERSOLL

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